DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 212 332 JC 820 038

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TITLE A Personnel Model: Hiring, Developing and Promoting Community College Employees.
PUB DATE [81]
NOTE 15p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Affirmative Action; *Community Colleges; Models; Occupational Mobility; Organizational Change; *Personnel; Personnel Management; *Promotion (Occupational); Recruitment; *Staff Development; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

The high priority placed on staff development by business and industry has not been shared by the community college which has tended to seek talents outside the institution rather than to develop those within. Community college staff development programs are usually designed to improve job performance rather than to enhance employee growth and flexibility. Drawing upon business/industry models for personnel development might help community colleges to meet employees' professional goals within the institution. The three components of an industrial model (hiring, developing, promoting) are present within most community colleges. Hiring refers to the recruitment, screening, selection, and initial classification of employees. Developing refers to a three-dimensional process including orientation, understanding institutional goals, and preparing to meet them. Promoting involves increasing the variety of on-the-job experiences employees might have to equip them to move easily to other positions in the institution. This model assumes an affirmative action plan, also patterned after industry (i.e. establishing position requirements, recruiting through personnel contacts, allowing time for recruitment, and establishing strong review procedures). A simplified version of the model (i.e. employment, goal-setting, evaluation, staff development) is appropriate for most community colleges and can apply to each employee, although institutions may wish to target groups if funds are limited. (KL)

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JC 820 038

A PERSONNEL MODEL: HIRING, DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING COMMUNITY COLLEGE EMPLOYEES

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Recently, the American Society for Training and Development reported that American corporations spent or allocated 30 billion dollars for staff training and development in 1980 and will continue to spend a like amount in 1981 despite the recessive nature of the economy. The amount is greater than the combined budgets of all community colleges in the United States.

In other words, industry places very high priority on staff development, a priority based on assumptions not often found in community colleges. Industry believes no person is completely trained or educated when they are hired.

Community colleges adhere to the concept of the "complete" employee. Interviewers and selection committees screen prospective new employees who are trained or educated to perform a specific set of tasks without looking for growth potential. The "search" is to find the most qualified person who can "fit" the institution at a particular level. Unlike industry, it is virtually impossible for the professional secretary to become the college president. The idea of the "complete" employee for a task tends to lock staff into a "slot" for which neither their peers, or supervisors encourage upward movement.

Upward mobility does occur in community colleges, but is usually the result of individual staff members setting up personal training goals outside the institution, attaining these goals through independent training and, then, if an opening occurs and if a variety of other positive conditions occur, the employee may move within the institution. More than likely upward mobility occurs through job changes. That is, the employee secures his/her additional training, then is employed away from the institutions. The idea that to "move up" one must move geographically permeates most educational institutions and certainly many community colleges.

Community colleges do provide staff development programs. However, these programs tend to provide training and education within the narrow confines of the employee's job functions. Staff development programs are usually designed to improve job performance, not enhance the growth or flexibility of the employee. For example, community college instructors are given additional

experiences in the disciplines or in teaching-learning theory. Janitors are taught how to maintain a building. Secretaries are given experiences that increase their effectiveness as office workers. Although these experiences may be beneficial in the short run, they do little to prepare for future jobs within the institution.

Suppose a community college instructor wanted to move into administration. Most likely moving to two new institutions would be required before the instructor reaches the level of Dean. Two more would be required for the presidency in most cases. Directors of the various service departments in a community college definitely have a difficult time moving within an institution and in some directorates a "peaking out" occurs early in the person's career with little hope of upward mobility. Where does the director of a Learning Resources Center move to in a typical community college? What about student activities? Bookstore? Intramural Sports?

Of course many instances can be cited that illustrate some "made it." There are some really good examples of community colleges promoting from within the ranks. These examples, however, are by no means typical. The generalization that community colleges tend to seek talents outside the institution rather than develop talents within the institution remains essentially correct.

An institution that only promotes from within may also have a great detriment to overcome. The inward spiral of ideas, ways of doing things, or a fresh approach to old problems might well be thwarted. A healthy balance between seeking new talent from outside and a solid internal development program may be the best answer to staff morale problems, continuity and predictability within the institution, and more appropriate use of tax dollars.

Using an Industrial Model for Employee Development

Seeking advice from industry for curriculum development, and special instructional methods has proved beneficial and appropriate for community colleges. To draw upon business and industrial models for the development of personnel might well be the most important consideration community colleges give to business/community college cooperation. It has already been pointed out that industry relies heavily on development models.

Community colleges and private enterprise face many of the same personnel problems. Unionization of employees, affirmative action requirements, search for new talents, staff development, unemployment projections (RIFs) and staff morale are just a few of the similar problems faced by each. Industry has, however, responded with overall plans for enhancing the professional life of employees while community colleges have struggled to respond to the charges--poor communication, low morale, and mistrust. Not only have administrators and Boards of Trustees struggled to respond, their responses have often been meager philosophical approaches without attacking the real issue--How do employees meet their professional goals within the context of institutional development or change?

The answer may be to borrow upon a hiring, developing, promoting concept used in industry but certainly applicable to two-year institutions. Most community colleges already maintain components of an industrial model which is shown on page 7. The components tend to be buried in personnel office practices, division and department procedures, and informal administrative practices. The three major components of the model as indicated by the title of this paper can be identified with particular offices.

A. HIRING

Hiring of staff is clearly identified as a personnel office function closely coordinated with the units of the institution who are charged with supervising the staff hired. In the concept of hiring, personnel offices (or offices identified with this function) must coordinate affirmative action goals, identify job descriptions, establish general salary ranges, recruit, initially screen applicants, and set up the interviewing process. Once the candidate is identified, the employment mechanism is implemented. Employment consists of establishing where the employee will work, who supervises, compensation levels, starting dates, special benefits, and completing internal records.

Although there may be several offices collaborating to bring about the hiring process, if a personnel office exists in the community college, the main leadership role will generally rest here.

B. DEVELOPING

Developing staff once hired seems to be a nebulous role, scattered about the institution, with no one in particular accountable if development does not occur. This is the primary reason development becomes a private action on the part of many employees, which in turn tends to mean development to secure a position elsewhere. Development should take on a three-dimensional aspect in the community college.

First, there is development that is more an orientation to the position and the institution. Supervisors have the responsibility to help the new employee identify other offices to be "worked with" in carrying out job duties. Additionally, office procedures, college policies, and other facilitating knowledge must be acquired. Depending on the level of responsibility and authority of the office the employee holds, this staff development component could take a full academic year before the employee is able to function without close supervision. Success on the job largely depends on the supervisor "initiating" or orientating the new staff member to the immediate objectives of the position and how the employee's actions affect other offices.

Poor performance by the employee or supervisor at this point may set up the dynamics for consideration for future staff development to be impossible. The supervisor should give a great deal of thought to how best to orient the employee. Unfortunately, the educational "group-think" of "the complete employee" causes supervisors to pay little attention to this aspect of development.

Second, moving staff toward understanding emerging institutional directions and goals is a part of staff development. But, preparation for being able to meet the requirement of these goals and directions is vital. Should a new instructional program emerge, or new facets of established programs, or a major new institutional thrust take place without staff development, the institution will likely face a staff affected by these changes who are defensive, and negative. If the institution has a professional staff that is a part of the governance program, or union, or association, the defensiveness may be "played" out through these groups. Charges of lack of communication, mistrust, staff-administration splits can often be traced to a new development, goal, objective, or direction being established without the staff being prepared or having the skills developed to deal with the new activity.

Therefore, staff development toward a dynamic goal-setting process, or new endeavors must be an integral part of the college development plan. For example, the college moving toward a greater use of technology to assist instruction should be willing to pay the costs of additional classes, conferences, staff publications, and in-house workshops on this topic. Moreover, having these experiences related to salary may also be appropriate. However, having the staff development to better carry out a program which is projected to not be part of the goals of the institution in the future may need to decrease while the others increase. For example, if the institution is considering word processing as a teaching program or as an administrative method to deal with paperwork, it would be unwise to continue sending secretaries to programs that increased their capability to type faster, to take shorthand faster.

It is probably unwise for the institution to encourage the teaching staff who are charged with conducting freshmen and sophomore courses to continue getting more advanced education in the discipline. Instead of having a better prepared instructor the college may have an instructor who teaches advanced concepts in lower division courses, but complains that students at the freshmen/sophomore level are ill-prepared. Continuing the example above, the instructor might be encouraged to develop his/her skills to better deliver the freshmen/sophomore course concepts.

It would appear that these two types of staff development are typical in both industrial models and in community colleges. However, industry classifies most of the above as employee training and education since they relate to performance of an employee in different roles on the job.

Development or organizational development is a term normally applied by industry to what is used here to describe "employee promoting." The concept definition is nearly the same. The terms have been changed to better articulate the intent of the concept to educators.

Private enterprise views organizational development as a dynamic function and responsibility of management. If the organization is dynamic--that is, changing to meet new markets, new technological advances, then management must constantly be developing a staff to meet these challenges through staff promotion and development.

"Employee development activities in the business world are designed to produce a viable and flexible work force for the organization as it moves toward its future." (Nadler, 1970)

In summary, an employee hiring, developing, and promoting program has a strong element of sound selection practices in the content of affirmative action followed by a solid orientation and employee development plan. New to many community colleges is the third component. A strategy for increasing the variety of experiences an employee might have on the job to easily move to other positions within an institution.

The model or schedmatic attached illustrates a method through which a position is opened and how hiring, staff development, evaluation, promoting can take place as an integral part of a personnel development strategy.

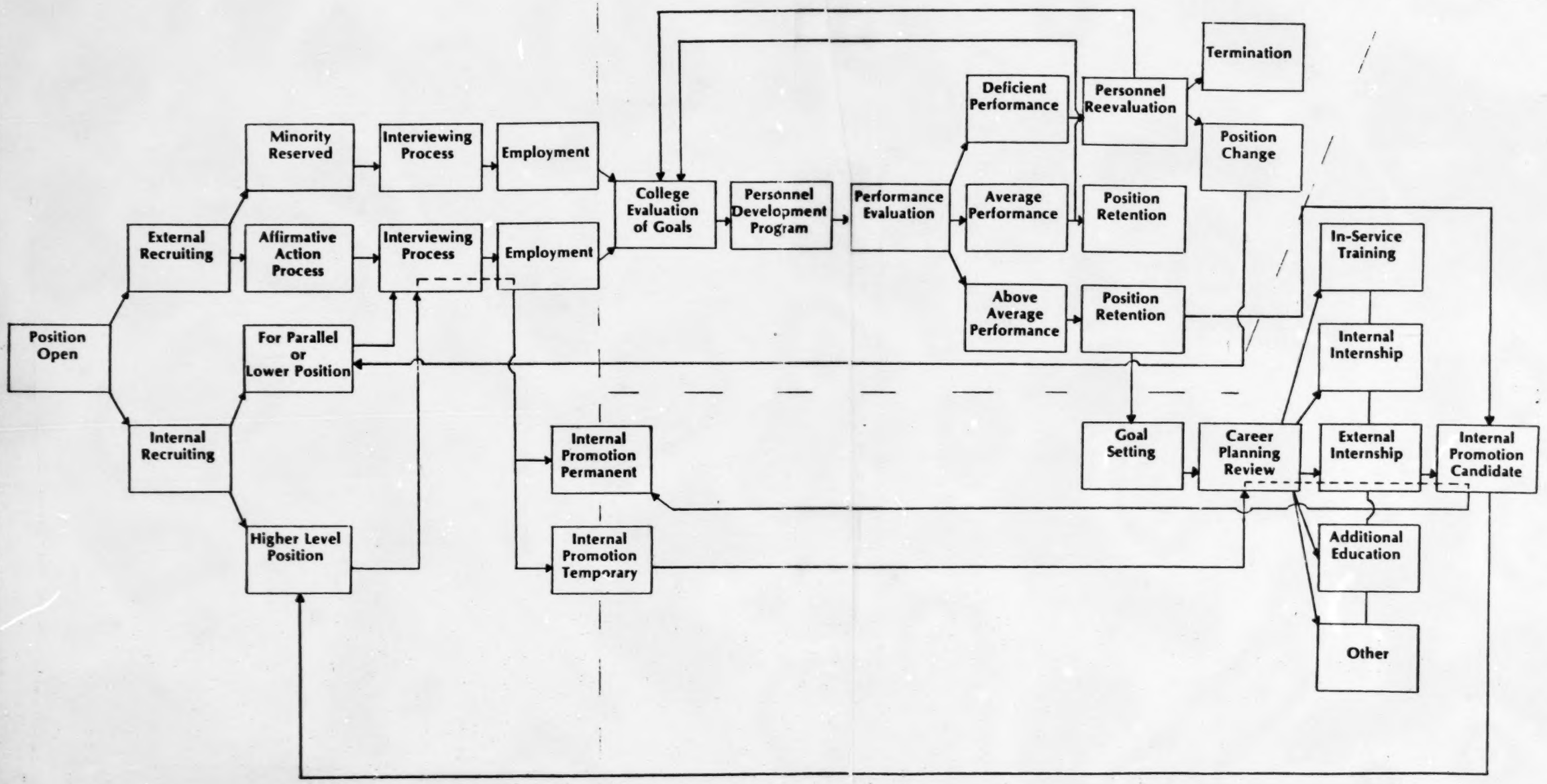
In most community colleges today current employees would be in the personnel development category moving toward a higher level position. Indeed upon analysis most colleges would find employees "strung" out in various components of the model.

A PERSONNEL MODEL: HIRING, DEVELOPING, PROMOTING COMMUNITY COLLEGE EMPLOYEES

COMPONENT A - HIRING

COMPONENT B - DEVELOPING

COMPONENT C - PROMOTING



Upon analysis of the model three clear components can be recognized. The components and segments are listed here for easy reference.

COMPONENT A: HIRING

1. Position Open
2. External Recruiting
3. Internal Recruiting
4. Minority Reserved
5. Affirmative Action Process
6. For Parallel or Lower Positions
7. Interviewing Process
8. Employment

COMPONENT B: DEVELOPING

1. College Evaluation of Goals
2. Personnel Development Program
3. Performance Evaluation
4. Deficient Performance
5. Average Performance
6. Above Average Performance
7. Personnel Re-evaluation
8. Position Retention
9. Termination
10. Position Change

COMPONENT C: PROMOTING

1. Goal Setting (Personnel)
2. Career Planning Review
3. In-Service Training
4. Internal Internship
5. External Internship
6. Additional Education
7. Other
8. Internal Promotion of Candidate
9. Higher Level Position

Most community colleges will already have many of the elements of components A and B and use some of the elements in component C for staff development (improved job performance). The industrial model calls for component C to be an integral part of the overall model or the organizational development strategy breaks down.

The model may at first raise serious concerns because it indicates a stronger effort at affirmative action to the point of designating positions as minority reserved. The model assumes a definitive affirmative action plan has already been developed. The elements titled minority reserved and affirmative action process will require a deliberate, extensive search for qualified candidates. Again the industrial model is adaptable.

There are at least four elements that can be used by community colleges.

1. Establish the acceptable requirements for entry into the position. When seeking employees, seek persons who meet the requirements but are not overly qualified.

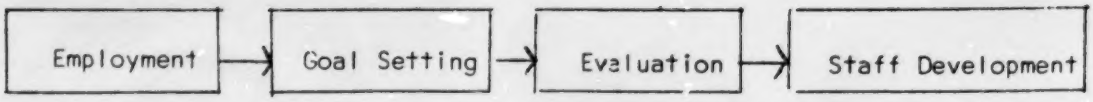
2. Actively recruit through personnel contacts. This may require college administrators to visit campuses with minority graduates. Possibly booths at appropriate professional meetings and other strategies will be needed.

3. Planning the position opening well in advance to put a strong recruitment effort forward is a necessity.

4. Establishing a very strong role for college affirmative action processes, such as designating affirmative action oversight review mechanisms, is very important.

At any rate, the first elements of the model to be implemented should be the affirmative action components. From that base internal staff development and promotional mechanisms become logical. Without first addressing affirmative action goals, the model will act to provide little opportunity for many institutions to secure minority employees, no matter how qualified. The institution also might find itself having to stop the process of the model to allow affirmative action to catch up if the entire model is implemented simultaneously.

Typically, a college will have a simplified version of the model like the one on the following page.



Consternation occurs when poor performance is noted. The "complete" employee does not perform poorly. The "complete" employee neither grows nor stagnates. Therefore, there is no mechanism in most schools to deal with malfunctions in the typical model.

If the "complete" employee does not function as desired, the employee is somehow determined "incomplete" and a great deal of time and energy is spent by the supervisor in "getting rid of" the problem. Quite often the situation becomes personalized and negative emotions are experienced by both the employee and supervisor for long periods of time. When this occurs, little opportunity is left for a more positive approach to the problem.

The model does provide logical avenues for staff development, reassignment, or termination. Obviously, personnel procedures will govern when the supervisor may move from one element to another, but at least there is a logical movement to take place.

The new segment in the model is "C." There is a recognition that no employee comes to the institution with only one set of skills or capabilities. It assumes that the employee and the institution has a desire to help each person grow professionally, to assess career goals, to sharpen other skills, and to develop as many possible avenues to other positions within the institution as abilities and capabilities will allow.

Element "C" is not perfect. It is still very unlikely the president's secretary will acquire the necessary skills to become president. But, at many institutions it is possible to use the model so that professional staff can fill a variety of faculty and administrative roles. It is possible for the clerical staff to reach the professional staff expertise level.

The model is applicable for each employee of the institution. It can be applied to Deans and custodians, faculty and clerical, the mail clerks, and division directors. However, each institution will need to target groups. The targeting is necessary because community colleges have limited funds. Funding the entire model at one time could be more costly than an institution can bear. However, in the targeting process, some consideration can be given to re-creditentialing staff to handle new curricula and programs, thereby avoiding RIF'S or providing avenues for offices to acquire badly needed short-term professional help to launch a new program or meet a pressing objective through internal internships. From a morale point of view, the model gives opportunities for more understanding between offices about how the college works. It gives hope to large numbers of employees for job satisfaction now with hope for the future.

The model calls for "gutsy" administrative decision making. Administrators will have to decide who is promotable, who has potential, and who should continue to be employed in the same positions (retention). A timid administrative/governoring board implementation of the model could create more problems than not having a model.

In most colleges the model can be implemented by re-allocating funds rather than finding new money. Much of the money needed can be found in categories set aside for recruitment, staff development, staff orientation, grants and contracts with government agencies, and "professional" travel. Currently these funds are so dissipated across college budgets that they do little to help institutions grow. They tend to encourage the "complete" employee to become more "complete." They tend to be allocated to the administrative and teaching professional staff to the detriment of all other employee groups.

Many college presidents openly declare the greatest resource they have at their disposal are human resources. Few, however, set about to logically nurture this resource through an organizational development plan.

In the 1980's dollars will be tight, staff will tend to be less willing to move to greener pastures. Administrators--especially presidents--will need a strategy for working through many new problems but with the same staff they had a decade ago. Many college employees have had little opportunity to grow in the last decade. Without growth and professional maturity of the entire staff community colleges cannot hope to meet the pressing problems of the 1980's.

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